



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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|-------------------------|--|---------------|----------------|
| PROJECT TITLE | Alpine Community Defense Project Periodic Maintenance | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Portions of Sections 36, T15S, R2E, and Section 31, T15S, R3E, SBBM | COUNTY | San Diego |
| LEAD AGENCY | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) | | |
| CONTACT | Pete Scully CAL FIRE – Monte Vista Headquarters | | |
| ADDRESS | Pre-Fire/Resource Management Office 2249 Jamacha Rd El Cajon, CA 92019 | PHONE | (619) 933-6503 |

This project proposes the periodic maintenance of the existing Alpine Community Defense Fuel Break, located 0.4 miles south of Interstate 8 between Star Valley Road and Viejas Creek Road. This project was originally developed by the Cleveland National Forest (CNF) in cooperation with the Alpine Fire Safe Council and was initially treated by CNF contract crews. This fuel break varies from approximately 175 feet to 250 feet in width, is approximately 1.3 miles in length, and will result in re-treatment of approximately 43 acres on a three to five-year return cycle. Treatment will include reducing the regrowth shrubs of predominantly chamise and buckwheat chaparral vegetation to maintain the targeted 80% reduction. No live trees will be cut, and ephemeral drainages will be left untreated. Broadleaved species, predominantly manzanita, ceanothus and scrub oak will be retained to present a mosaic effect but may be thinned where necessary to maintain 80% reduction. Annual grasses and forbs will be left untreated. Shrub vegetation will be hand cut and/or masticated at ground level and root structures left in place to reduce the potential for erosion. All cut vegetation will be masticated in place, chipped on site with chips spread to a depth of three inches or less, or piled and burned on site.

This project is located on the eastern edge of the unincorporated Community of Alpine in south central San Diego County. This portion of Alpine is a sparsely populated area of mostly single-family residences situated 0.4 miles south of Interstate 8 and the Viejas Indian Reservation. The project is on privately owned lands within the Cleveland National Forest. Topography in the area ranges from grassy meadows to chaparral covered rugged hills.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 15304, Minor Alterations to the Land
- Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The project is consistent with Categorical Exemption: 15304, Class 4 Minor Alteration to the Land. After completing an environmental analysis, the Department has determined this project will have no significant impact on the environment. This determination is based on field assessments, a CNDDDB search, greenhouse gas emission calculations, and archaeological review completed by CAL FIRE Archaeological staff.

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, utilities and service systems or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is retained on file at CAL FIRE MVU Headquarters in El Cajon.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Matthew Reischman 6/29/2021
 Matthew Reischman, Date
 Acting Deputy Director of Resource Management
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection